

The Honorable Michael K. Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Powell:

This letter has to do with the Satellite Home Viewer Improvement Act of 1999. I fall under an "unserved household" designation for my local Network broadcast stations. Currently, my only choice for Television is satellite television service and currently, I am subscribed to the Dish Network. For New England, the Dish Network offered local network stations from Boston, MA, which did a reasonable job of covering all of New England, and more importantly, offered Professional sports like the Red Sox and Patriots. Last week, the Dish Network told me that my local solution of the Boston networks would be taken away in an effort to cut costs and to offer other programming, and that for network stations, I would now only have a choice of New York which does not provide news, sports, or programming of any kind for New England. The Dish Network said that it is doing this to prepare for the upcoming merger between EchoStar and DirecTV, as if it is already a done deal. Well, I wanted my congressional representatives to know as well as the FCC, that your little plan to offer local stations by having one monopolistic company that is not regulated, will result in unserved households in New England states, and in my case, Vermont, not having any local network stations which include, local news, sports, and programming for more than 2 years while the Dish Network slowly brings up the New England locals to its service, and as they are among the smallest markets, they will be the last ones the Dish Network will worry about. My guess would be that there are other areas of the country that will have similar problems to what we will have in New England. So currently, we had a workable solution, and now there will be nothing for years thanks to your approval of the Dish Network/DirecTV merger. To my congressional representatives, Vermont has the highest satellite subscriber percentage in the country at 41%, so if you think this issue is not important to Vermont think again. Stop this merger, and bring in some competition that will care about the NorthEast. Or, at least, mandate that the Dish Network keep its current programming (including the Boston networks) until such time that the New England locals are brought up. I really don't think that is too much to ask.

Sincerely,

Jared Surething
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